

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSCE-00 NSC-05 INR-06 CIAE-00

PM-03 DODE-00 SP-02 L-01 SAB-01 SCA-01 PRS-01 /041 W

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R 082253Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 133

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 1860

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PBOR, PINS, PN, US

SUBJECT: TORRIJOS PREPARED FOR VIOLENCE OVER PANAMA CANAL

1. DURING PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH ME MAY 7, FORMER PRESIDENT FIGUERES SAID HE WAS VERY WORRIED BY ATTITUDE OF TORRIJOS AS EXPRESSED DURING EXTENDED CONVERSATION WITH HIM APRIL 24 ON PANAMA CANAL QUESTION. FIGUERES SAID TORRIJOS IS DETERMINED THAT THERE MUST BE A SETTLEMENT OF THE PANAMA CANAL ISSUE NOW, GIVING PANAMA SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE AREA. FAILING SUCH AGREEMENT, TORRIJOS SEEMS PREPARED TO ENCOURAGE MASS POPULAR DEMONSTRATIONS AND EVEN UNDERTAKE A CAMPAIGN OF DIRECT AND VIOLENT ACTION TO FORCE A DECISION. FOR THE TIME BEING, TORRIJOS IS SEEKING BROADEST POSSIBLE LATIN AMERICAN SUPPORT IN HOPE THIS WILL PERSUADE USG TO REACH AGREEMENT AND U.S. CONGRESS TO RATIFY. IF THESE EFFORTS FAIL AND AGREEMENT IS NOT REACHED AND RATIFIED PROMPTLY, TORRIJOS IS VERY LIKELY TO RESORT TO DIRECT ACTION. FIGUERES DESCRIBED TORRIJOS AS A MAN WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO MAKE ANY SACRIFICE IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE HIS AIMS. HE EXPRESSED HOPE, THEREFORE, THAT U.S. WILL BE ABLE TO RESPOND IN SOME

SATISFACTORY WAY. FIGUERES SAID HE DID NOT SEE HOW ANY LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY COULD FAIL TO SUPPORT TORRIJOS ON THIS ISSUE. PROBLEM, THEREFORE, COULD BECOME MAJOR ONE  
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FOR THE UNITED STATES WITH LATIN AMERICA.

2. FIGUERES ALSO PASSED ON IMPRESSION HE GAINED FROM TORRIJOS THAT AMERICAN CIVILIANS LIVING IN CANAL ZONE CONSTITUTE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO BETTER U.S.-PANAMA RELATIONS. HE DESCRIBED THEM AS HAVING WORST SORT OF COLONIALIST MENTALITY AND SUGGESTED THAT SOONER U.S. COULD BEGIN MOVING OUT SOME OF THOSE PERSONS, BETTER IT WOULD BE.

3. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION, PGASIDENT ODUBER SAID TORRIJOS UNDER GREAT PUBLIC PRESSURE TO CONCLUDE AN AGREEMENT RESTORING PANAMANIAN SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE CANAL ZONE. ODUBER SAID TORRIJOS UNDERSTANDS THAT RATIFICATION OF NEW TREATY MAY TAKE SOME TIME AND HE IS PREPARED TO WAIT FOR THAT PROVIDED THAT AN AGREEMENT IS REACHED AND SIGNED WHICH WOULD RELIEVE SOME OF THE PRESSURES. HOWEVER, IF THERE IS NOT EVEN AN AGREEMENT WITH EXECUTIVE, THEN TORRIJOS MAY FEEL OBLIGED TAKE SOME ACTION TO SATISFY HIS PEOPLE.

TODMAN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** AGREEMENTS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, CANALS, NEGOTIATIONS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 08 MAY 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** X1  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Page Count:** 2  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 08 SEP 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <08 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <13 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** TORRIJOS PREPARED FOR VIOLENCE OVER PANAMA CANAL  
**TAGS:** PBOR, PINS, PN, US, CS, (FIGUERES, JOSE), (ODUBER, DANIEL), (TORRIJOS, OMAR)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006